REWRITE The Magazine of Effective Writing

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"WHAT SHALL I DO?"

When you start out to be a writer and all through whatever career you make of it, you are constantly faced with problems, choices as to which direction you will take. These turns in the lane may or may not appear important at the time. But each one shapes to a certain extent the permanent place you're eventually going to occupy, or the level in the field of writing to which you attain at long last. And you will be a remarkable and unusual person if you do not make your full share of mistakes.

It is not too much to say that a writer's success depends a good deal upon the wisdom and sum of the many individual choices that he makes over the years. We know that it is impossible not to make some mistakes. But I always am sorry to observe those mistakes in a writer's life that a little careful thinking could have eliminated. Experience, it is said, is a hard taskmaster. And, I guess it is in the nature of our professional work with writers, that we see many of the writers whose fingers have previously been burned. But we can always hope that we can save a few men and women from the sad experience of being "taken" by some of the expensive & rather ineffectual mail-order courses, critic-agents and other harpies, who suck blood from writers. That's why we continually mention as specifically as we can without running afoul of the libel laws, so many of the worst of these in REWRITE. And why for three years now, I have run the risk of appearing to knock some of the other critics by describing very frankly at Durham, N. H., each summer the various types of rackets that "prey on writers". And they do prey, whether they deliberately seek to extort money, or charge fees innocently, through their own ignorance, for incompetent advice. We feel that if all our haranging saves even one writer from expending money he or she could ill afford to lose, we have perhaps done our part to help bring writers a little nearer to the success they dream of and need so badly.

Let us start at the beginning and trace a few of these decisions as they are likely to come up. Probably the first is the question of whether it shall be fiction or non-fiction writing. Because the material rewards are so much higher, the answer is often fiction. I have seen it again and again, that a writer with no previous experience at all prepares to do imaginative writing. Because a would-be writer of this kind does not know even the first principles of shaping up a story, his chances of succeeding are mathematically microscopic. Unless he or she has a rich background of culture and some imaginative skill he is almost certainly doomed to a puzzling failure. We practically always urge writers of this kind (1) to warm up with at least a few months factual writing; and (2) to take some published stories apart and analyze the general pattern very carefully. Many of the folk we so advise think we are crazy or attempting to run up a bill for our services.

The next problem is: short or long. It is fairly obvious that other things being equal, it is wiser to build a few window-boxes and learn how to handle your tools before you begin to build a house. But not so with novel writing or writing a book. We've seen writers, as in the previous paragraph, who jump right in and wonder why they sink in deep. I believe, again, it is wise to analyze one's resources and, generally speaking, to start with short lengths.

Commercial or Quality? That is a moot question. The woods are full of nice, quiet persons who grit their teeth and try to do the slimiest of Confessions, or to do rip-snorting bang-bangs, when they should be working on character stories. It would help a great deal if those persons who wish to make money quickly, would add up the odds against a new writer competing with men and women who have spent 20 years mastering that casual or warm, intimate style. That brings up the matter of Secondary markets as against Slicks. I would guess that 99% of the writers trying to break in, shoot for the top or nothing. A 5,000 word story aimed at the S.E.P. They'd be so much wiser if they took a try at that secondary magazine they also read. Some of the smaller magazines: HOUSEHOLD, THIS DAY & FARM JOURNAL or even a "give-away", such as TOPPER, have huge circulations.

At this point you must have observed that as you get under the surface, the decisions become more complex. You have to make two or three "decisions" simultaneously. Vertically and horizontally across the board, so to speak. That is why it is not easy to understand what you are up against. And why each bit of experience is so valuable. Will you be a specialist or a generally good writer? Will you be a money writer, or write to express the ideas you find interesting or believe are important to say? Believe me that I can mention a number of topflight authors who have made the wrong decision in this regard. I used the name of one last month. He is satisfied apparently that he made a right decision, but I could identify another, a woman writer I feel certain has to live with a bitter regret.

That brings up the biggest problem, which we all have to face at one time or another. Shall I gamble on my dreams or grab at something safe right in front of my nose? I do not know how many writers have asked me the million dollar question: have I got what it takes? Elva and I know that it is practically impossible to answer yes or no, because it involves character as well as talent. Sometimes it is better to have tried and failed than never to have raced at all. Each of us has to face that one, the sum of the other aims

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MAKE THE U.N. STRONG. — William E. Harris, Elva Ray Harris, Editors. — HELP MEN TO LIVE IN PEACE

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

May God grant you health, happiness and a prosperous new year. May He also give you a chance and the will to live your faith, and to give it full expression in worthy deeds.

LETS MAKE IT A SPIRITUAL CHRISTMAS!

Let each one ponder seriously this Christmas season how we can help individually and collectively to make Christianity, which is our single best hope for a world of peace & true security, better approach and honestly fulfill the ideals of its Master. Increasingly, you hear men of deep faith & intelligence speak out against the folly of sects that worship the same Lord, but cannot work together. Recently, we heard tell of a young couple that was refused permission to adopt a child because the parents-to-be, otherwise seemingly ideally suited to the task, praised God under the wrong roof.

In wartime it is different. Thousands of battle-worn veterans know that in the South Pacific and in Korea the same man frequently sings Mass at 7 of a morning and reads a general Protestant service at 9. Why cannot this be done at home? Why cannot we work together for the more abundant life as we join hands and work for absolution in the face of the Great Reaper? It is silly and false self-righteousness not to. Ultimately, we shall be faced with the fact that we cannot afford to do anything else.

Here in Lunenburg, we have begun to practice Christianity in a novel way. The Congregational and Methodist Churches have organized a fine "joint projects" committee. Some of the Town's citizens, who are not members of either faith, are assisting them actively to find ways that they can work together for the benefit of better living for the entire Town. A Town-wide "Parish" has been organized and already in less than a year there is a program of joint activities, such as Sunday School and vacation school in operation and working smoothly. Youth work is also under way and a plan for visual education being worked out. But the great discovery has been that folk of different sects can stand together and accomplish results of a lasting community value. It is proving more beneficial than the idea of federation, which was previously voted down. It may not be the one true way of life and religion. But it works and is carrying one small town forward. The possibilities lying ahead are enormous.

NEWS AND COMMENT

Somewhat similar in ideals, although it's limited to the field of writing, is the American Poetry League. From the chairman of the publicity committee, Alwyn Coristine, Apt 2, 4560 Barclay Ave., Montreal, Canada, we are in receipt of news of the judging of its annual contest. All told 52 entries were submitted for the 34 prizes offered by poets & editors. (Bill & Elva are honorary members, and REWRITE has been a prize donor for several years.) First place was tied and poet-winners to the fifteenth place were announced. A good organization.

Whatever your allegiance in the election, it must have been heartening (1) to observe the heavy vote all over the Country, and (2) the selective choosing that the voters made in a manner that favored no party. If this year's election proves anything, REWRITE believes that on the whole the results proved in the nature of a rebuke to the professional politicians, who are willing to use whatever means are necessary to win.

There is an old saying that the machines, which both sides use to control votes, turn elections only when the public is indifferent. A sizable and determined electorate is one thing no political boss can estimate. It was the independents who streamed into polling places and made the many surprising results possible. It was at once a hopeful and grim sign of the desperate desire of people everywhere for a peaceful, orderly & secure democracy. It prophecies no good to the political party that approaches the 1952 campaign with nothing more than oratory, organization and money. The mood of the citizens would seem to indicate that they are tired of corruption and empty promises. They want an era of constructive, creative action.

Writers everywhere have a rare opportunity to take advantage of this situation. Do not sell America short. Shoot straight & hard!

FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD POETRY

By Elva Ray Harris

THE POET'S WORKSHOP

It was nice to receive all the comments about the two poems that were up for discussion in the September issue. In order that a real workshop session may be developed, I am going to call on all of those we have space for to stand up and speak for themselves.

Here is the first poem we are discussing. It was sent in anonymously.

DOWN THROUGH THE LINE

Sing a song of soapsuds,
Of bleach and whitening rain,
A swishing song of washing
And scrubbing out the stain,
For I'm a drudge with diapers
Hanging on my line.

Sing a song of first grade!
Oh, where's my baby gone?
When you're six and twenty-six
Parting isn't fun.
I wish that I had diapers
Flapping on my line.

Sing a song of spring brides,
My daughter will be one.
And ring the joyful bells at last!
Oh! Pleasure that is mine!
In time there may be diapers
Drying on her line.

Stanley M. Kenney of Conewango Valley, N.Y., says "Down Through the Line" should stress JOY. As it is at present it begins with a tired note, yearning in that second stanza, & expectancy in the last. As you suggest, the author may have had some deeper idea than the words portray. However, certain words could possibly be changed to make the meaning more positive. The fifth line, second stanza should read: 'Now I wish I had diapers'. Also, the positive note is lacking in the final stanza. I'd like it this way:

Sing a song of spring brides,
My daughter now is one.
I heard the joyful bells at last!
Oh! Pleasure that is mine!
How I long to see diapers
Drying on her line!

"I'm not sure whether the present note in the first stanza should not be changed into the past. How would it sound with the fifth line changed to 'One could always see diapers,' or 'I'm used to seeing diapers'. The last line in each stanza, of course shouldn't be changed; they are the keynotes of the poem."

Evangeline Austin, Ipswich, Mass., writes: "I agree with you that the poem hasn't quite reached its final stage. The idea is good & also the first verse seems to be the best. But I think line six in each stanza needs another beat. 'A-flapping' may not be correct, but perhaps we could use 'out flapping'.

Is this an improvement?

Sing a song of soapsuds
Of bleach and whitening rain,
A swishing sound of washing
And scrubbing out the stain,
For I'm a drudge with diapers
Out flapping on the line.

Sing a song of first grade
Oh, where's my baby gone?
I'll miss her so—she's only six.
I do feel put upon!
I wish that I had diapers
Out flapping on my line.

Sing a song of spring brides
My daughter will be one.
Oh, ring the joyful bells at last
A new home is such fun.
In time there may be diapers
Out, flapping on her line.

"In such light verse the rhymes must naturally, be true. I think the refrain should be the same each time."

From Mary Grant Charles, Potter Place, N. H., we hear this:

"The things I liked about 'Down Through the Line' were the title, the idea, and rhythm. Changing a few words would, I think, give it a lighter touch, though it would necessitate changing the rhyming lines also. 'Stain' has a rather unpleasant connotation here? How about 'spots'? And something to replace that too prosy 'diapers'. 'Napkins' won't do, of course. Perhaps 'three-' or even 'four-cornered pants'."

In Gasport, N.Y., Julia Hull Winner wrote her comment. "The poem is really three poems or at least one poem in three parts. Robert P. Tristram Coffin said one time, 'whoever lets Time in lets in Space and Death. A poet tries to shut out all three.' And again, 'A poet is an artist in making most of—one time or one thing.' It seems to me that that is where this poem falls down. The author's weakness is that she has let in Time. I believe a poem is a great deal like a snapshot But one difference is that the poem permits you to get into the mind of the person pictured, in the sense that you can recall the past or look into the future.

"Thus, in this poem the poet represents a young mother, then a woman a little older & then a near grandmother. All this in the same poem! Had she phrased it as though she is a grandmother to begin with, and recalled both of the earlier phases, I think it would be a better poem. Or I suppose she could be this young mother and vision the future. However, I like the grandmother's viewpoint better—perhaps because I am one."

There we have the comments of four poets. What do you think of them? Wouldn't Mr. Kenney's suggested lines be better if they maintained the rhythm of the poem? Do you agree with Mrs. Austin that the refrain should be always exactly the same? Or do you think it should be varied just enough to build all the way through the poem while maintaining sufficient repetition to be recognized as a refrain? Do you agree with Mrs. Charles, that "stain" and "diapers" do not have a place in any high poem? Or should the poet stick to the natural words, the everyday words, in order

not to seem strained or humorous? Has Mrs. Winner put her finger on the big trouble? Is she correct in saying that it should be written from one point in time?

What do you think about the comments of 4 busy poets who have taken time out of their tight schedules to advise another poet? And what do you, the author of this poem, think about these suggestions? It is now your privilege to select what you think applies, and to reject all else. The very act of thinking over these comments, agreeing or disagreeing, but formulating a constructive and positive opinion, will tend to make you a better poet. Every time you exercise your critical, objective faculties, then turn about to become a creative poet again, you strengthen & develop your artistic muscles. Please let us know whether you have been helped.

Since we lack space to discuss the child's poem this month, we will take it up in February at the next meeting of the Workshop. So that everyone can get in the game, we're reprinting it. We will be delighted to get more comments. Send them soon so I can study them.

THE SCAPED PEOPLE

The scaped people in the tub
Are fond of swimming. When I take
My bath, they ride the waves I make.
I catch them in my hands and rub
Them on my knees. They only stop
A moment. Then they quickly glide
Back down my two-leg mountain side,
And dive into the sea---kerplop!

GOD'S SYMPHONY

Building through the ages magnificence
Beyond the ken of mortal skill, earth's might
And majesty proclaim the power from whence

Its glories have emerged; as in the night
The panorama of the vaulted skies
Gave birth to glory of the' morning light,

And molded minutes into hours that rise
To heights beyond Time's fartherest dimmest rim.
Higher than ever soar the worldly wise,

Scribed indelibly, as might Cherubim,
Silent harmony in sempiternal
Rhythm traces Divinity's autonym—

God's symphony--a timeless, eternal
Omnipotence, endlessly supernal.

Belle S. Mooney

And here is a new poem to be discussed, sent in by REWRITES good friend, a friend of writers everywhere. Dr. Mooney who lives in Kansas City, Mo., has a poetry textbook in preparation, we hear. Your dead-line for this workshop page will be January 31, 1951. But the earlier we receive comments the better the Workshop will, naturally, be! Help me to help you.

New subscriptions and subscriptions renewed PROMPTLY make possible more and better workshop sessions. Tell your friends.

DON'T GO "OFF-TRAIL" AT FIRST

There is a tendency among inexperienced & beginning writers to bite a bigger and more difficult assignment then they can handle. A story that is definitely off-trail, or full of controversial or taboo ideas; or an article that falls between two potential markets, is not a wise choice when your technique is limited. Yet we run into this kind of problem repeatedly. And when the writer insists on being a perfectionist and selling it before he starts doing another piece, there's a delicate situation for any critic to face.

That is the kind of problem that the very incompetent or commercial critic will sidestep by pulling his punch. He will softsoap the client, or further evade the issue, suggesting that the piece be sent out. When it bounces back, as it inevitably will, usually with only an impersonal rejection slip, a writer is naturally puzzled. The critic can laugh it off by saying in effect, we tried, and failed. Let's go on to another piece. A writer, however, is not helped unless he understands why he failed. And that is such a controversial matter, requiring a technical and human understanding of the situation, it is unwise for a critic, who is primarily interested in Success and fees, to become involved. It is much easier to reiterate that next time we will Sell. And so the victim is lured on to further slaughter.

On the other hand it is difficult for the well meaning and competent critic to get an inexperienced writer to face the issue. The writer will, very humanly, dodge the blame, if he can. He will say that editors "do not recognize good stuff when they see it". Or the agent or critic does not know what he's talking about, so let's try another. If you tell a writer straight out that he does not write well enough, he will often "take it", but will seldom believe you. You hurt him because you tend to break down that inner, secret sense of self-importance, without which none of us can continue to exist, according to the late John Galsworthy. Somehow an honest critic has got to tell the inexperienced writer he is off the beam, or trying to hew a log that is too big for him, without discouraging or offending him. But because the average beginning writer is very sensitive, and the critic does not know his man inside and out, mistakes can be easily made at this point. If the critic handles his client too gently, he fails to help him. But if he rubs him too hard the wrong way, the client seeks another critic, who will bamboozle him, and evade the issue.

And that's the real point: the only way a writer will learn at this point is to study the problem objectively, and keep his feelings out of the way. I don't say you should not write what you want to, or what you know best about. I do say you should try to do a piece editors will want, not the showy, difficult tour-de-force. Be very practical.

MARKET NEWS AND SOME COMMENT

Members of the WCS Family turn up in surprising places. A letter from Paul Twitchell discloses he is public relations assistant, National Association of Home Builders, 1028 Conn. Ave. N. W., Washington 6, D.C. He informs us that the housing industry "remains virtually untapped by free lance writers so as many feature articles are concerned". He urges free lances to contact him for ideas.

I take this suggestion with a traditional grain of salt, even though I welcome co-operation from any sources. You see Paul very kindly tipped us off that the same form letter is going to all the other writers' magazines (therefore, you will have competition a-plenty). Also, material from a propaganda source must always be "decontrolled" before it will satisfy an editor. Your a first and foremost a representative of your readers—not of special interests with an axe to get ground profitably. Finally, if I am not mistaken, there is a controversy hidden in the woodpile. The mass production builders don't the exponents of cooperative, low cost housing and government housing projects. There's big money (and lots of advertising) involved in that direction. So you've got to be careful whose toes you tread on.

It is a fact though, that organizations of this kind can be useful sources of ideas that you can work up independently.

Velma Reynolds Harper, Pauls Valley, Oklahoma, (cor. sec. of the Oklahoma Poetry Society) was operated on Nov. 12th.)

St. Anthony's MONTHLY, Rev. Williams J. Phillipps, Box 390, Newburgh, N. Y., is a pleasant and friendly magazine to deal with. That's according to Sten. Kenney.

Carmelite REVIEW and FAMILY DIGEST are two on the contrary, that several writers have reported to be very slow in reporting, or even answering letters.

Here's some sound comment from one of our subscribers, Mrs. Gracye Dodge White, who writes children's stories, in addition to bringing up 7 children and writing a column in her husband's newspaper, The Coos County DEMOCRAT for 5 years. It concerns reader response.

"They like simplicity and humor. They adore giving advice, and, most of all," she adds, "they like to be able to identify themselves with what they read." A feature with which the editors of REWRITE are not unfamiliar. Our readers too, are personally interested in the homey bits of personal detail that we let fall. Often they express interest, give us some advice or help. They feel we are "Bill" and "Elva", just close personal friends—whom they know well. We like it that way. You, too, can build reader interest.

DO YOU NEED MARKET ADVICE?

The new plan by which we undertake to answer questions about markets, has swung into action with a bang. You recall that we announced last month we would endeavor to advise writers at 25¢ a question provisionally unless it absorbed too much time. So far the response and the cooperation of the WCS Family has been gratifying. All of the letters requesting data have been considerate. One woman sent in our $3 minimum fee, telling us to keep the balance on file. Others have volunteered information they had in exchange for what they wanted. We have helped a number of persons either by specific market data, or practical advice out of extensive background experience. It looks as if an invaluable feature had been started.

Paper Money. We reprint herewith a portion of the article we discussed last month. This is the Most Important Issue facing America today.

Tell the People: Your "Half-Dollar Dollar" (*Business*, Oct. 18) contains just what the American public needs to know. You are doing a fine job and a patriotic one.

The article is so important I would like to suggest that you issue it in the form of a reprint and distribute it to every citizen. I feel sure members of the Federal Reserve Board and many bankers would welcome the chance to give it to friends and customers.

W. E. Hamm, *Rewrite Magazine*,
Lunenburg, Mass. (Nov. 11)

Half-Dollar Dollar

Can the Treasury in good conscience ask the American people to buy Government bonds? This dire question was implied in resolutions passed by the Seventy-fifth Annual Convention of the American Bankers Association in New York last fortnight.

Appeal to the Government's conscience was pointed, but restrained: "The Government can sell savings bonds . . . more readily and with better conscience when Government itself has taken more adequate measures to insure against the decline in the buying power of the dollar." Among the measures ABA recommended:

(1) Stop inflationary borrowing from the banks; (2) follow financing policies (adequate interest yield, for one thing) which will make Government bonds attractive; (3) permit interest rates to rise so as to restrict credit and stimulate saving; (4) cut back non-defense spending by at least $6 billion a year.

Rapid erosion of the dollar has had FRB worried. Its key concern now is to reduce bank reserves, which are the base for inflationary lending. "What's the use of taxing income away from people and corporations if they can go to banks and get money on easy terms?" FRB asks.

Making 6 from 1. The most important factor in inflation is the enormous increase in the money supply, which becomes inflated by a complicated hocus-pocus involving bank reserves, credit and low interest rates. Here is how planners use these items to balloon our money supply:

The Treasury sells a $1,000 bond to a bank. Interest yield on the bond is so low the bank does not want to hold it as an investment. In effect, it turns around and sells it to FRB. Under the present system FRB must take it. It pays the bank for the bond in cash or deposit credits in a Federal Reserve bank. This $1,000 goes into the bank's reserve. And under the law the bank can issue loans against this reserve at the rate of $6 to $1. The result: $6,000 more in circulation, based only on a scrap of Government paper.

Another phase of the problem that keeps FRB awake nights is this: To buy Treasury bonds, FRB must create money out of thin air. FRB pays for bonds or notes by giving the Treasury a credit—say for $1 million—in a Federal Reserve bank. The Treasury checks it out for salaries or other Government expenses.

But that isn't the end. Eventually every dollar of it gets into the nation's bank reserves. That is, it becomes a base for loans at a $6 to $1 ratio. This process Treasury Secretary John W. Snyder and the Council of Economic Advisers wish to continue, while FRB demands that it be stopped by raising interest rates.

FRB's reasoning is easily grasped: If interest rates were raised, individuals, banks and other institutions would buy and hold more Government securities. Then FRB wouldn't have to create more money to buy them, reserves would be cut, and credit (bank deposits) would be restricted. There would be some hope of arresting decline in the dollar's value.

"How long can this spiral go on?" people were beginning to ask. Answer: If the money planners want it to, it can and will go on until the American people lose confidence in their money.

The First Stone. FRB's desire to stop ballooning the dollar is in part frustrated by its own bad past performance. For 10 years it reluctantly (some say "disgracefully") acquiesced in the Treasury's inflationary demands. Now it would like to stop the process pronto. But insiders know that inflation has meanwhile become so much a part of the American setup that a rapid switch by FRB would invite the Board's extinction.

It is your money. DON'T let it be debased More!

REWRITE

NEWS AND COMMENT

HOW-TO-DO-IT BOOKS. A selected guide, edited by Robert E. Kingery. R.R.Bowker Co... $3.50. This is a guide made possible by the cooperation of the NYC Public Library. Covers 350 spare-time activities; 2,100 books.. Sounds like a valuable research tool.

SAT. REVIEW OF LIT., 25 W. 45th St., NYC, is printing an interesting general column—"Even Good News Is News". Might give you an idea, as well as keep you up-to-date.

Col. Cob, DROVERS TELEGRAM, Kansas City 15, Mo., pays $2 each week for the best joke, & $2 for the best poem. There are a number of other columns of an informational or entertainment nature that invite correspondence. This paper is one of the Corn Belt Farm dailies: Chicago Daily DROVERS JOURNAL; St.Louis Daily Livestock REPORTER; Omaha Daily JOURNAL-STOCKMAN. Study these for additional opportunities to sell fillers. Possibly a market for an occasional specialized feature or correspondence.

FTC has ordered several persons trading as the Unicorn Press to stop misrepresentation in the sale of the Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Encyclopaedia. This title has been mentioned in such proceedings a number of times. That doesn't add up to very good publicity.

HUNTING & FISHING is to be combined after all with OUTDOORSMAN, we are informed. Only editorial hold-over is Robert Whittier, H&F boating contributor. Editing will be handled in Chicago, circulation in Boston. We've asked for an official statement from the editor of OUTDOORSMAN as to future needs.

The Cooperative News Service contributed, a trifle quixotically, a note that as of an early date in November only one daily paper, and that a cooperative venture by the AFL & CIO unions on strike, was being published in Pittsburgh. CNS added grimly that this paper's office had had to be enlarged 3 times, a degree of success that had induced out-of-town papers to try to knock The REPORTER out by flooding the stands with their papers.

Sign of the Times. The Baker & Taylor Co., one of the largest wholesalers of books, has moved its plant to N. Broad St., Hillside, N. J. Away from NYC traffic snarls. And costs.

Another. The Food & Drug Administration, a gov't. agency, has let itself get into a curious tangle whereby it has been attempting to put a ceiling on the amount of nutritional-value that can be put into a loaf of bread! FDA, apparently, wants to pull Co-op Triple Rich loaves down to the level of commercial bakers' bread. Because the latter involves a single patented formula, the Anti-Trust Division, another governmental agency, is looking into the matter. Seems to be a possible violation. Ah me, Bureaucracy is a wonderful thing!

MORE NEWS AND COMMENT

JUNIOR ARTS & ACTIVITIES, Velma McKay, 53 W. Jackson Blvd. (Room 820), Chicago 4, Ill., wrote to a WCS Family member recently: "You will notice that we use almost nothing but a selection of art and craft articles. We shall be glad to see anything along that line."

HOLIDAY HOUSE, Vernon Ives, 8 W. 13th St., NYC 11, publishes only juvenile books which have quality rating. Does not use verse, or fairy tales.

CIRCLE, a Berkeley, Cal., magazine and OPPORTUNITIES ON PARADE, a San Francisco magazine, were listed recently in a market list in another writers' publication. Both periodicals are reported by a member of the San Francisco Writers' Workshop to have been out of circulation for 2 years.

One of the WCS Family had occasion to consult the Coca-Cola Co., Drawer 1734, Atlanta 1, Georgia, about the accuracy of a story with a tie-in. Franklin Garrett, of this company's advertising dep't, not only edited the yarn, but referred the correspondent to their foreign subsidiary, The Coca-Cola Export Corp., 515 Madison Ave., NYC 22, for possible pictures. Good trick to know.

The Editorial Viewpoint. Our wise friend, Winthrop P. Tryon, former music critic, and still active as an editorial writer & worker for the C.S.MONITOR, wrote us recently a paragraph many editors will approve.

"I find," he says, "I like it when a letter comes in from a correspondent along with a ms. or even routine news copy telling some thing of his idea and intent in writing the piece. Often you find the purpose is exactly what you would recommend, even if the article itself misses fire. A great thing when writers can become as aware of their readers as you think you are."

There speaks an editor with the true humility of an exacting craftsman. Many editors, I believe, will understand and share the idea. It is not an invitation to be wordy or didactical and controversial. It is a practical suggestion that you state your reason for writing any given piece quickly, forcefully, quietly and then get out. View with mistrust the "big executive", who says: "Do not write me letters. I will do the deciding —but fast." You may have to "Yes" him, if a sale is what you want. But you can still have your private opinion ("He's a darn fool!") No one in his right mind, not even editors, ever shuts the door knowingly on a good idea. Editors least of all, because their future, their circulation, depends upon the discovery and promotion of good ideas.

As one editor remarked once: "I have a reputation for being tough, always rejecting a ms. when I read it. I'm a push-over really. For I will live and be remembered for my dis-

coveries."

NEWS WHILE IT IS NEWS

OUTDOOR LIFE, F.A.Person, Where-to-Go Editor, 353 4th Ave., NYC 10, is temporarily, overstocked on short items (350 words) thru the May, 1951, issue. And on longer pieces, 600 - 1,200 words for approximately a year. (Mr. Persons personally contacted "reliable contributors, and the response has been very good.")

However, "possibly next spring," he says, "we'd be glad to look at short articles of a length not more than 350 words on good fishing and hunting locations. Such articles to be based on personal experience, and not on hearsay or releases of tourist bureaus, etc. They should tell where, what, how reached & best seasons, as well as what accomodations if any. No photos used in this dept. Pay is prompt and, unlike that for features, is on space-rate basis, which averages about 7¢ a line as set in type."

The Where-to-Go Dep't. does not buy "features". For information in that line, writers should contact Mr. Raymond J. Brown, Editor-in-Chief.

The New AMERICAN MERCURY, Wm. B. Hule, 32 East 57th St., NYC, isn't going to run poetry, the editor reports in a regular mimeo r.s. sent to contributors.

> You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself.
> —*Galileo.*

MOTOR BOATING, C.F.Chapman, 572 Madison Ave., NYC 22, used a humor piece in the Nov. issue by Dorothy Alexander (WCS Family). It was bought about a year ago, at which time Mr. Chapman promised he would let the author know about the scheduling of the piece. He did, in a pleasant letter. A complimentary copy was mailed simultaneously. Pay was on Acc. Nice chap.

Minnesota Quarterly reports that "because of the abrupt withdrawal of financial support, it has become necessary to suspend publication for an indefinite period."

PLAYS, A.S.Burack, 8 Arlington St., Boston 16, Mass., awarded 5 prizes in its 10th Anniversary Playwriting Contest. Although it might be overstocked temporarily on account of the Contest, this is a good market. Uses plays for young people; several age groups.

MARIN Magazine, Independent-Journal, Marin County, Cal., devoted practically an entire issue (Oct. 14) to poetry in celebrating Poetry Day. Good stuff, too.

The Anonyme Workshop's "Fall Membership Activity" bulletin came too late for mention. There will be others during the winter. Address as above: 32 Edgewood Ave., Mill Valley, Calif.

Please Subscribe to REWRITE, Renew Promptly

PRIZE CONTESTS AND MARKETS

ZONDERVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE, Grand Rapids, Mich., announces Juvenile Christian Fiction Contest. Prizes: $250, $150, $100. For the 6-14 year reader. Word length: 17,500 up to 50,000 words. Closes: Dec. 31, 1951. (See: additional short story contest on P. 8.)

The POETRY SOCIETY OF TEXAS, Mrs. Milton R. Greer, 3450 Ashury, Dallas 5, Texas, sent a 6-page list and rules for its annual & monthly prize contests. We received it in November; nicely printed and extensive in its awards. The annual contests close Dec. 1. The monthly prizes are given except July-Sept. A number of the prizes are open to non-member poets.

PENN. POETRY SOC., Mrs. Blanche W. Keyzner, Box 532, State Museum, Harrisburg, Penna., is offering (1) $7 & $3 for a poem in any form not over 30 lines. (2) $3 & $2 for the best sonnet. (This contest open only to members, who have not published a book of poems.) (3) Col. Henry W. Shoemaker, 1st V.P., offers a prize of $5 for the best lyric on a Pennsylvania historical heroine. Contests close Mar. 1, 1951. Open to members; annual dues, $1.

WESTMINSTER AWARD FOR FICTION, Fiction Dept. Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia 7, Pa., 4th annual prize: $7,500 (outright prize: $5,000, remainder advance against royalties). A minimum length of 75,000 words. No restrictions on authors or materials, except that previous submissions may not be resubmitted. For rules, address as above. Closes: June 1,1951

Our New Envelope. The new size of envelop that we started selling last month, quickly caught on. It is a No. 6¾ (3 5/8 x 6½). It's light weight, but ideal for filing notes or market data. We use them in the CENTRAL MO. MARKET FILE. Also for paying bills, letters and so on. White envelop, substance 20. It's nice looking; we like it. Got 5,000.

Cost? 70¢ per 100. The next lot will certainly be higher. You pay the postage, but a pack of 100 weigh less than one pound.

Sign of the times. Bill has received over 25 fan letters on his article in PROFITABLE HOBBIES about making the stamps in one's mail pay for themselves. When ordinary people so desperately need money, politicians get wise!

Penn. Poetry Soc. Blanche W. Keyzner, the president, tells us the Society is starting chapters in Altoona (James Kurtz, pres.) and Harrisburg. Chapter dues, $2 per year, Penn. Poetry Soc. Dues, $1 per year. Chapter members not required to join the parent organization. It is hoped, though, that the Society will be able to finance a yearbook.

The aim is an alert state-wide group. But we hope that out-of-state membership is wel-

comed, as is the case with the Poetry Society of Texas. At any rate, we at REWRITE are glad to see such organizations as these and the Poetry Society of Oklahoma functioning. It is a healthy sign indicating a better future for poetry. We hope eventually to find similar societies in every state.

Velma Reynolds Harper, cor. sec. of P.S.O sent us the attractive 4-page bulletin covering the fall meeting and activities. It's our hope that these three major societies & others may ultimately exchange greetings and ever work out common projects in furtherence of poetry. REWRITE will actively support a development along that line.

Very belatedly, because our reading of the current publications is not always kept up-to-date, we wish to commend a Sunday School magazine, YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAPER, American Sunday School Union, 1816 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 3, Pa., for an excellent editorial in the August 6th issue. In "No Poetry, Please!" it both criticized a competitor who does not accept poetry, and emphasized youth's need for poetry to make a full Christian life. Hurrah!

Zondervan Contests

The Zondervan Publishing House, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, announces the following manuscript contests:

A $1,000 Juvenile Christian Fiction Contest; $750 first prize, $150 second prize, and $100 third prize; between 17,500 and 50,000 words, geared for the 6-14 age group; closing date: midnight, December 31, 1951.

A compilation of Christian bedtime stories, not over 1,200 words, for the 5-10 age group. Accepted manuscripts for "Bedtime Stories for Boys and Girls" will be paid for at the rate of 1½¢ a word; closing date: December 31, 1950.

For early 1951 publication: "Bedtime Stories for Children." Manuscripts not to exceed 2,500 words. Details regarding rates paid and type of material desired may be had by writing Zondervan.

IF PROFESSIONALS DO THIS, WHY DON'T YOU?

I was talking with a trade writer recently. He told me that regular as a clock, the first thing he does every morning is to put his typewriter in proper shape: cleans type and puts in a new ribbon, if needed. He also uses the best ribbons obtainable. He says they are money savers in the long run. They are for anyone who wants his mss. to have a good appearance, and who beats a steady tattoo for 6 or 7 hours a day.

We mention this just to show you the kind of competition you are up against. You had better take all possible pains. It pays.

DO YOU NEED MS. ENVELOPS?

The best quality envelops at the price a stationery store never will offer you, because we buy in quantity and do not seek a prohibitive mark-up.

SMALLEST Sizes (No. 10¼ & 11¼) (two fold)			
25 of Each	$ .90	50 of Each	$1.65.
SMALL Sizes (6¾x9½ & 7x10) (one fold)			
25 of Each	$1.00	50 of Each	$1.85.
LARGE Sizes (9x12 & 10x13) (flat)			
15 of Each	$1.00	30 of Each	$1.90.

All prices plus postage. 30c. is average.

DO IT NOW! BUILD FOR TOMORROW

I find the greatest single method of getting more work done in a day is to do it at once, when any idea comes into my mind. We have three typewriters in this house and we keep them all busy most of the time. One is for Elva's work, one for all of our correspondence, the third for REWRITE. Very easily we could use several more typewriters. It is worth a lot of money not to be caught in a jam when a machine breaks down. Or to be able to leave work laid out during an interruption.

But the real blessing is the ability to hop from one machine to another. Only this morning, I was typing a market tip. When I finished it, it was a simple matter to go to the other desk, where paper and envelops stood ready for instant use. A letter was despatched to the editor seeking further information about a question that the news tip raised.

We have open stenog. notebooks and/or scratch-pads on all our desks and most of the tables about the house. But it often is several days before a note can be attended to. It saves time & energy if the job can be done immediately & with a little practice continuity of thinking is not broken up or repeated unprofitably several times.

Even in the matter of actual writing this technique can be carried over. I find I often do a filler, or drop a note to a writer suggesting a market he can hit or an article or story he ought to do. Moreover, to learn to write competently at a moment's notice about anything in the vast field of informational writing, is an asset of immeasurable value to a writer.

I don't say that real creative writing is done in this way. Even a short story, Mr. H. E. Bates to the contrary, represents a good deal of sustained meditation and concentrated craftsmanship. But this ability to do writing quickly and easily, often under unfavorable conditions of noise and distraction, is helpful in several ways. It saves time, reduces nervous fatigue, and makes you efficient. Much of the writing that is done these days is done on a part-time basis, squeezed into a few minutes' interval between other, more necessary or inescapable duties. (This may be one explanation for the decrease and general lack of good writing commented upon by Herschel Brickell in "Prize Stories" for 1950.)

But if you do a job today, you won't have to do it tomorrow; you will be farther ahead at the end of the day. And it is very good, I can tell you, for the morale. It makes the next job much easier to get behind you.

HOW NOT TO TELL A STORY

Here is the list of rules for telling funny stories, which Bennett Cerf has drawn up in his new book, "Laughter, Inc." They are not particularly original. Most of them are commonplace among all raconteurs. But every writer can learn something from studying up on the points Cerf makes.

(1) Don't make a story too long.
(2) Don't forget your point in the middle of a story.
(3) Don't laugh too much yourself.
(4) Don't lay hands on your audience.
(5) Don't tell your story more than once to the same audience.
(6) Don't give the point of the story before you begin.
(7) Don't insist on telling the story after your victim informs you he has heard it.
(8) Don't oversell your story in advance.
(9) Don't tell your stories at the wrong—places.
(10) Don't tell your stories at the wrong time.
(11) Don't always "Know another version".
(12) Don't tell stories that depend for their humor on events or personalities, which your audiences have never heard of.
(13) Avoid dialect as much as possible.

SO HERE IS A BROAD HINT

The Eugene F. Saxton Memorial Trust, Harper & Brothers, 49 E. 33rd St., NYC 16, announces its 22nd fellowship in 8 years. The release calls attention to the preponderance of fellowships that have been granted to fiction writers. The explanation, it is said, is due to the "disproportionately large percentage of applications for work in that field. The trustees wish to emphasize the fact that non-fiction projects are not only eligible, but welcome."

This would seem to be a cue for some able young writer without funds to come up with a good idea for a non-fiction book. There is no deadline on these fellowships.

MONEY TALKS

"As between a 1,000-copy sale of a $3 book and a 300,000-copy sale of a 25-cent edition of the same book, at current royalty rates, the author earns out better by $750 if he goes straight into the 25-cent 'original' field instead of first publishing in hard-back form and then splitting the 25-cent reprint royalties with his publishers, a quasi-real requirement in all hard-back contracts."

SO DO AUTHORS

This would be the GOLD MEDAL BOOKS as issued by the Fawcett chain.....The statement was issued by a writer who preferred to remain anonymous, but pointed a mean finger at book publishers. Said part of the money added into this calculation, in his own experience, is still being held by the publisher for six months, till his second royalty statement.. Whereas Fawcett pays before publication. In this case, a larger sum than the total paid by the author's last "hard cover" book.

Of course there is the matter of shooting at different audiences to be considered.

YOU CAN WRITE THE GREATEST STORY

Many of us think we live in a civilization where the struggle for the raw necessities: food, shelter, clothing has been put behind us forever. That is not true. Nature has only to go on a minor rampage, or men on one of their periodic destructive binges, to prove the contrary. The greatest theme in all the world is still and will be for years without end man's search for security in a dangerous world. All the miraculous inventions, which science is able to pull out of its research will not make it otherwise, until man learns to live in peace with his neighbor, to create instead of to destroy.

In dedicating a Friendship Food Ship that was carrying a UN Day cargo of gifts from 17 states, Raymond W. Miller of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization recently said that 50% of the world's people are born, live and die hungry. And, REWRITE maintains, practically all of that suffering is needless, if men would face the problems of living really realistically. That is something to think about this Christmas. At another meeting, a group of 150 Illinois teachers after hearing speakers tell them about the Coop Movement, favored teaching their students to learn to "get along" instead of "get ahead".

The greatest stories in the world at this moment are the ones tied in with the adventure of living, the struggle to defeat Evil and achieve Security. The moral issues were never more complex, or closer to the front, even though standards seem utterly relaxed, and at the lowest level in years. This is a story that millions will respond to, if you tell it as a story, without too much namby-pamby preaching. It is a theme susceptible of treatment as high adventure. The great majority of service men returning from battle areas have been the living proof of this.

If I were a boy or girl entering manhood, or womanhood today, I know that (out of the experience I have today) I would want to devote my life to some form of lay, but Christian, service to my fellow men. However cynical one may become over the thin veneer of our materialistic civilization, the fact remains that the only sure personal happiness and spiritual security one may achieve today stems from the friendships one makes and the appreciation he earns through being a really good neighbor.

But then it occurs to me that where a man or woman can only do good within the limited area that his physical abilities reach, a writer can through the written word perpetuate the faith and comfort that his imagination may stir up, not only round the world, and back again, but down through the ages—literally to all eternity. His influence is out of all proportion to his often frail, unsubstantial strength. So, when you are blue or discouraged, think what it means to be a writer and carry the torch of freedom.

WRITERS, DON'T FLATTER YOURSELVES

Glenway Wescott, writing a foreword to the recently published "Maugham Reader", quotes that author as saying: "There is a particular drawback in the career of writing. When you have finished the day's work, & you must take your leisure and wait for your creative gift to be restored, anything you do in the remaining hours of the day seems pale & flat."

Although I have the greatest respect, and admiration for Mr. Maugham as a craftsman, & despite the fact that in my youth I experienced that feeling, I cannot help saying, in my opinion, to restrict that "drawback" exclusively to writers, is to deify them, and to give their craft a preciousness, and artificiality it does not deserve. To interpret a universal experience in such terms is to be complacently smug and superior. It is nonsense.

The act of creation, the opportunity to identify one's self with the infinite, is not limited to writers. It is not the peculiar, sacrosanct privilege of any pharisaical type or group of Brahmans. I know for a fact the artist, who paints in oils or water colors, feels exactly the same way when he believes rightly or wrongly that he has accomplished a masterpiece. (The fact that it is or is not has nothing to do with the satisfying feeling one experiences. When we're young we are easily satisfied. As we grow older and both our tastes and abilities develop, it is much harder to capture that happy exaltation after the excitatory climax of an act of creation.) But I have no doubt that a scientist experiences it exactly as does a writer. Can you imagine what it must be like to realize that you have accomplished the final step in the discovery of penicillin, for instance?

It is a great experience to have a share, even a small or imaginary one, in the great mystery of creation. In the case of a writer, unlike that of a team of scientists, or two lovers at a supreme moment of mating, it cannot be shared. The writer must turn into an isolated human being; he is the only one in the world. He must turn his back on mere activity, face inward and commune with himself or outward, but over the heads of others to the distant horizon line of the creator. It is an exhausting experience.

When it is over, there is an immense surge of exhilaration. But this is only to bridge the gulf between one high peak of energy & the next. It is nature's way of protecting, and compensating one of its own. For actually, a writer has drained himself of energy. What he really needs is rest and recreation. The rest of the day seems "pale and flat," to use Mr. Maugham's phrase, only because one slips from a high point of discharge to the inertia of depression. It is like the need for a battery to be recharged, or the let-down after a drink. If you wish visible proof, you have only to think of the dreadful depressed feeling you have some days, when you are simply hacking out a job you have no confidence in. Remember the countless days you've left your writing table with curses and the outraged cry, "I can't write!" You've sworn you'd never go near your typewriter again.. But a few days later, when your energy seeps back, your mind begins to itch again as the ideas commence to bubble.

No, writing isn't quite the privileged or thrilling phase of living that Mr. Maugham & others would have you believe. But is a wonderfully satisfying one, if you understand, and make the best possible use of your faculties. If you know that you are like a bath sponge and that when you have been squeezed dry, you are still potentially ebullient, & vital. It is comforting to know that as Mr. Maugham says, your creative gift will be restored to you; that as surely as the sunrise follows the sunset, and spring succeeds winter, the water of ideas and energy will flow back into your empty sponge.

But I don't like Mr. Maugham's use of the word "wait". Creation is an act of faith, of believing that each morning or night or time you go to your desk, you will be charged, & ready to do your work. But I believe firmly that "God helps him who helps himself". You cannot sit back and just wait literally for nature to do your task. You have got to care for your battery or sponge: keep it in good order, ready to work. You have to fill up & stoke your sub-conscious with good ideas. A sponge that is never placed in water, won't absorb water by itself.

In the same way, after you have rested it is necessary for you to read, clip, or live in the world; to gather experience and idea food for your subconscious. You have to let these germinate, like seeds, But never wait!

WCS MEMBER CALLS FOR HELP

John D. Stanard, P.O. Drawer 1866, Chattanooga 1, Tenn., is interested in contacting serious trade writers who will accept small assignments on a straight fee basis. As he explains:

"This work does not require the writing of articles . . . all we want are accurate answers to a list of 2.5 questions, and it should not take more than 10-20 minutes to secure such data." Payment for this work will never be less than $2 or more than $5. All correspondence should (1) state experience, if any, (2) enclose at least one tear sheet of something published in 1950, (3) give home address and phone number and (4) contain No. 10 stamped envelope (to be had at any post office for 6c) for our reply. Inexperienced and new trade journal writers will be given an opportunity to work with us . . . groups of assignments can be sent to the experienced writer who will take time to show proof (in the form of tear sheets) of his ability. Please, no post cards."

John, as you'll see from the clip, allowed a writers' magazine to place this information, as shown here, before its readers. The response from a large number of inexperienced and incapable writers was very bad.

Because we have a newsstand & wide circulation, there is no way we can control the response which REWRITE readers make. But we hope that they will take time to study the requirements as intelligently as they can, and show John how serious-minded is our membership. Good luck.

THE MONTH'S NEW BOOKS

THE LAND OF LITTLE RAIN. Mary Austin. Photographs by Ansel Adams. Introduction by Carl Van Doren. Houghton Mifflin Co. $6. This is one of the great nature books of all time & it is wonderful that it should be in print, after being unavailable for a long time. It describes the land "between the high Sierras, East & South from Yosemite, beyond Death Valley, on...into the Mojave Desert." This is done by a woman who combined observation with a real sense of poesy and a deep feeling for the spirit of man amid immense, eternal, yet ever-changing natural forces. It is an experience just to read such a book, one that will not leave you the same person.

THE HOME EDUCATION OF A BOY. William R Barrett. The Updegraff Press. $2.00. This is a book every parent and all writers should be required to read. Like the preceding one, it is an experience in living. It makes you glad you have the precious power to read. A writter can learn a great deal about enlarging & utilizing his faculties from watching William Barrett observing his growing son, & using his own imagination with rare skill and resource to plant the seed of rich living in the heart of a curious and eager boy. You'll be the loser if you do not read it.

DON'T SHOOT THE BILL COLLECTOR. Preble D.K. Hatch. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. $3.00. This is a hilariously funny book of the dry, Yankee yarns type. But combines remarkable observation with an interest in human nature, & an occasional excursion into sentiment. Therefore, it is entertainment, yet leaves something to think about afterwards. Good job.

CHILDREN OF THE BIBLE. Elizabeth Yates. Illustrated by Nora S. Unwin. Aladdin Books.. $2.00. Elizabeth Yates has done primarily a job of editing here. She has taken 15 tales about Jesus, David, Moses, Elijah and other children from the Bible. She has collected, edited and written bridge material, so that a small single book results. Even the brief prologue is taken from Matthew, chap. 19. It is a convenience for mothers and youngsters who might otherwise not read these charming stories.

THE COMMERCIAL WRITING SCHOOL RACKET. Catherine Barrett. University of Denver Press.. 50¢. The author of this pamphlet is herself a distinguished and able teacher. She feels the way all of us do about the expensive, ineffective mail-order courses and "critic-agent" incompetents, who bilk writers of big sums of money they often can ill afford to throw down the drain. No one would get more pleasure from seeing something constructive done about this sad matter than Bill & Elve Harris. But Catherine Barrett's "blast" is so general in its definitions and suggestions, it leaves even long time exposers of frauds confused and bewildered on telling wolves & honest teachers apart. This little book has good intentions, but it won't help much.

THE MODERN SHORT STORY. H.E.Bates. The Writer. $2.75. First published in 1941 by Thomas Nelson & Sons, this is a literary analysis of the quality type story. Not a textbook it is a background book that all serious writers should read. It is by one of the quality authors of short stories of today. A Selection of the WRITERS' BOOK CLUB.

PRIZE STORIES OF 1950, The O.HENRY AWARDS. Ed. Herschel Brickell. Doubleday & Co. $3.50. This annual anthology would be valuable for the comments of the editors and his judges if no stories were printed. But this year's assortment is a lively and stimulating one. A textbook really for the craftsman who takes his job seriously. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

HOW TO SECURE COPYRIGHT, The Law of Literary Copyright. Richard Windsor. Doubs Publications. $2 ($1 paper bound.) A useful little brochure, one of the Legal Almanac Series, which includes others on Juvenile Delinquency, Religion, Election Laws and Drivers Manual. Practical & thorough, backed by actual examples; tells you how to protect the property created by your brains. A WRITERS' BOOK CLUB Selection.

BOOKS OF LASTING WORTH

HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL. Manuel Komroff. $3.50. A beautifully explicit and helpful book. An author who is an experienced professional, is enthusiastic and practical while talking in the language beginners can understand. Good book for all of us.

WRITING & SELLING FEATURE ARTICLES. Helen Patterson. Probably the best book about feature writing. And this is the best opportunity for the inexperienced writer to "break in". Hence a book that is an investment you will find pays off.

WRITING TO SELL. Scott Meredith. $2.75. You can learn a good deal about selling from the comments of this advertising agent. It can help you to sell while you are not in position to command a top agent.

THE ART OF READABLE WRITING. Rudolph Flesch. $3.00. A good book to help you make use effectively of words. Everyone should read it.

THE CRAFT OF THE SHORT STORY. Richard Summers. $5.50. One of the best books on effective fiction writing. Straight shooting, by a good teacher, who knows his stuff.

ARTICLE WRITING & MARKETING. George I. Bird. $3.50. A realistic and helpful book for the serious free lance writer. Most writers are in need of the marketing advice it gives.

WRITERS ON WRITING. Ed. Herschel Brickell.. $3.00. The book that the staff of the U. N. H. Writers' Conference wrote. Bill Harris the author of two chapters: on Short Story, and the writer-agent relationship.

HOW'S YOUR BATTING AVERAGE?

Here are the sales reported to us in this past month:

Violet Wallin (England)
Stories: The LADY (England), OUTSPAN (S. Africa).

Lorraine Pentell
Story: CHILD'S COMPANION.
Confession Story: INTIMATE ROMANCES (2).

Edward W. Ludwig
Serial: YOUNG WORLD.
Articles: VENTURE, AUTHOR & JOURNALIST.

Frances Durland
Article: CLEAR HORIZONS.

Helen Langworthy
Short Story: TOPPER.

Bernard A. Roth
Feature Filler: AIR FORCE.
Fillers: OUTDOOR LIFE.

Winona Nichols
Feature Article: Duxbury CLIPPER.
Junior Short Story: HIGH TRAIL, published by the Light and Life Press at Winona Lake, Ind.

Florence Feil
Article: LIFE TODAY (October).

Florence M. Davis
Juvenile Story: CHILDREN'S FRIEND (Utah).

Major Franklin M. Davis, Jr. (F.M.D's. son)
Short Story: COLLIER'S (Armed Forces Personnel Prize Story, $1,000 award. October 14th issue.)

Virginia Sievert
Poems: Writers' Market & Methods; & OUR LITTLE FRIEND.

Kay Lill
Juvenile Story: D.C.COOK PUB. CO. (This is her 32nd sale.) SUNSHINE.

Marjorie S. Scheuer
Poem: N.Y.HERALD TRIBUNE.

Gracye Dodge White
Juvenile Short Stories: CHILDRENS ACTIVITIES (7 so far in a series).

Stanley M. Kenney
Poem: St. Anthony's MONTHLY.

Edward W. Ludwig (More)
Science Fiction Short Story: OTHER WORLDS.

Carrie Esther Hammil
Articles: CLASSMATE, OPERA NEWS.
Poems: MAGNIFICAT, VISION. (114th sale)

This is the biggest month we've ever had. You'll find more news on P. 14!

SKIL YOUR ANGRY OUTBURSTS

Here is an interesting suggestion born of exasperation. Helen Langworthy tell us that the story reported in the "Batting Average" column grew out of her irritation over loyalties she observed of certain groups among Americans for the "old Country". They seemed more loyal to the country from whence ancestors or they themselves came than to the country that had given them much. "So this story," she remarks, "is frankly one on the theme of America FIRST. I called it, "Homeland".

There is an excellent hint there. When a happening or something that irritates you & makes you mad, stimulates you, consider its possibilities as story or article material. The woods are full of authors who were "hit" by an idea in this manner and immediately & decisively sat down to write their feelings out of their system. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is a classic example. Often the writer doesn't have any expectancy that he will sell such a piece. But he feels compelled nonetheless to do something about the condition or the idea.

As a writer gets more experienced he usually does think that such a piece might be right for a certain market. If he thinks the possibility through, and keeps it on the outer edge of his mind, he can often fit his emotional boiling over to fill the hole, which he thus dimly foresees. It never hurts anyone to plan and organize effectively an attack instead of just rushing in and scaling a rampart armed simply with hope. But there is not too much importance in this fact. It IS important, however, to learn instinctively to put emotional energy to good use.

The WCS Circulating Library is grateful to Dr.Blythe A. Bacon for 2 copies of the WHITNEY'S HANDBOOK, and other books. These editions are not the latest, but the articles, which they contain, are not dated, and many of the markets listed remain unchanged. We have not stocked this title, because of expense and the fact that we believe writers, under ordinary circumstances, should have a copy in their own library. (We keep 2 regularly on our desks.) However, these 2 books will make some market information available to writers, who have not seen the Handbook. Both copies are already "on the road" working. Write in if you want them to visit you some day. The latest edition is sold by the WRITERS' BOOK CLUB.

We thank Bettie Kelley for a contribution, her second this year, to the WCS Scholarship Fund, which as in the past several years is thus able to bring REWRITE and/or WCS counsel to writers, who would not otherwise get the help they need. The thing we like about this sort of thing the most is that writers who could ill afford to have their leg pulled by some of the so-called critic-agents or expensive mail-order courses, are advised as to how to invest what little money they can.

THIS IS DRAMATIC CONFLICT

The textbooks always urge you to use Conflict, Dramatic Conflict in all of the STORIES you write. It helps if you get the essence of it into your articles, poems, each and every piece of any kind of writing that you do. But in my experience very few writers understand clearly or have visualized a dramatic conflict that runs throughout what they write like a spine. They have a vague, unsure recollection that conflict is a disagreement. But they don't appreciate that a dramatic conflict is more than just a fight between two prize-fighters.

That is why we have always insisted that a decision is involved. A true dramatic "conflict" represents a problem, an issue. It's a fork in the road where a person or a body of people must make a choice. They face the most important change they can at the moment imagine. It's like a fellow about to make a proposal to a girl, or a girl about to accept, or reject a proposal. In each case there is likely to be a tremendous change in the way of life. Even if the change does not occur, life will not be the same. That is decision that is meaningful, vital.

A conflict can only be great if the force on each side is great. If the stakes are important. A riot may cause a lot of damage & destruction, but it is not as dramatic as a struggle, let us say, between a small, proud free nation fighting for its life against a powerful, bullying dictator. And just as the quality and meaningfulness of the forces on each side help to shape significance, so too, does the duration of the struggle. A short, sharp conflict that is solved by a trick or surprise twist is not as enjoyable for your reader as a long, prolonged conflict, which tightens the screws inch by inch in a manner that seems inevitable and inescapable in its logic.

But it is the factor of placing two able, powerful forces in opposition and maintaining them throughout a story that seems to be the most difficult lesson for many inexperienced writers to learn. So many writers, it seems, cannot divorce themselves from looking at their story from only one direction. Which of course is that of their hero. They fail to be objective and think in terms of a character or opposing force that seeks, and struggles hard, to prevent the hero from achieving his goal.

To use an analogy, from long years of being stagemanager for countless dramatic stories, it has become automatic for me, whenever I see a character moving in one direction, to devise a "hand-brake" that we pull to slow him up, to retard him and make difficult his progress. This is not because it gives me pleasure to see him fail, but just because I know what will make an audience of ordinary people sit up and be interested. I ask myself: "What is the opposing force?"

Another device I have learned always, and eternally to keep in mind is the idea of two extremes. Just as there is night and day or hot and cold, fast and slow, fat and thin, a similar set of opposite poles can and ought to exist in every story. Whether it be melodrama or intellectual high drama, there is the never-ending struggle between "good" on the one hand and "evil" on the other. What the MC desires and the reader believes is a good and satisfactory thing for him to gain is symbolical "Good". The opposite thing or force is "Evil". Between the two lies inevitably the no-man's land of conflict.

Now let us look at another analogy that I thought up recently, in order to help someone to see this eternal problem more clearly. You remember that the Devil took Christ up to a high place and offered him all that his heart desired, if he (Christ) would fall down and recognize the Devil's sovereignty. You see, even God understands the universal element of dramatic conflict. Well, let us, as an allegory, imagine that a man is walking across America from West to East. He is a strong, likable character and he is accompanied by a friend, whom we, the readers on the side-line recognize as the personification of good. Mid-way across the continent, perhaps somewhere in Kansas, they see a man approaching them. We recognize this man immediately as the personification of evil He smiles good humoredly, slows down, attempts to pass the time of day with the two others travelling in the opposite direction.

Presently, he suggests that the hero turn around and travel West. The MC demurs, he's got objectives in the East, He likes the company he already has. The Devil offers larger and more alluring inducements. He cajoles and wheedles. He perhaps even threatens and attacks the MC's companion, seeking to discredit him. The Devil's campaign expands and develops both in breadth and intensity. You can picture the dramatic scene and write it in your own terms. You can build up the issue, making it more important and the ultimate decision on the part of the MC at once more difficult and imperative.

The point though, is that this is the way your story should always look to the reader as he pursues his way down the printed page toward the final line. Two strong forces in a desperate struggle. Each wishes to get on in the direction he is going. Neither intends to give ground. Both hope to win. They are poles apart, complete opposites. And in between them are all the possible gradations, that normally separate white from black. In selecting dramatic scenes, you seek to give the illusion of this underlying struggle between two opposing forces.

To do this effectively, you try to select, eliminate, intensify so as to identify both forces, to define clearly and forcefully the issue, and to make memorable the battle. It is your story. It is what you sell.

THE BATTING AVERAGE COLUMN (More)

Helen Langworthy (More)
Articles: The HOMEWORKER, TRUE EXPERIENCES, BUILDERS.

Beverly Herris
Article: Vermont LIFE.

We are exceedingly gratified to see the unusually large reportage of sales and mss. that have been placed in the recent month. Someone chided us a few weeks ago for listing in Batting Average Column some market reports that did not mean real sales. We do not believe money earned is always the only sign of success. We do exercise the censorship of not listing many of the non-pay newspaper poetry columns that are reported to us. Most of those will take almost anything that's sent. Although there are newspaper poetry columns, which are edited with care and discrimination.

The real interest of this reporting to us, and, we believe, many of our readers, lies in a genuine loyalty among the members of the WCS Family. We are all of us glad to see even the humblest writer among us win a tangible reward. And the value is gauged in terms of what the struggle signified to achieve, rather than the material prize that was captured.

We know that readers of this column have communicated with, and advised each other. Round robin members have been drafted, and a good deal of excellent cooperation has developed, which would not have occurred, if the Column had not existed. For all of these things we are glad. We hope in the year that will soon be upon us, all members of the WCS Family will be represented by (1) items listed, helpful reports about markets, or just an occasional idea sent in to Bill & Elva. We like to hear from our friends. Doing so, helps us to aid them in the grim battle for survival, and for progress forward.

The Center Box. Howard Pease did a nice job, we think, when he submitted to an interview. I like the forthright way that he talked about his writing. You learn something from listening to him talk shop. It helps you to do a better job.

WRITERS NEED GOOD MAIL SERVICE

It looks as if the US Mail is in for an overhaul. It is your chance to tell your men in Congress what you want. I hope you will do it, too. In one direction business firms are angry at the way the 3rd Class mail has been pushed aside. This means circulars & advertising. But it also includes small magazine such as REWRITE and the poetry, little magazines, etc. Newspapers—especially the afternoon editions have suffered also, by the one delivery a day.

The reason for this is the fact that many postal deliveries miss the one delivery, in the smaller cities, and so mail that is important to the recipient, lays over twenty-four hours. It is quite possible for this to happen incidentally at both ends. That adds up to two full days and any extra along the way. The U.S.Mail today is a 24-hour, continuous business. People have been trained to expect, demand that kind of service. But you can't get it on only one delivery a day. Or if the post offices are closed down at night. Or if political appointees whose only qualification that they vote right, are put on the payroll. Your timely articles and stories, you know, suffer by slipshod handling of this kind.

The other direction that a major change may be achieved in is in raised fees. Books and parcel post, small magazines are provisionally to be socked hard. It is right the users of the mail should pay a fair share of the cost. But why not use modern equipment to reduce costs? Why put political incompetents on payrolls? Why make the Post Office be the only department, which must be so efficient & clean in its expenses? Does Congress never waste money?! I am not logrolling for "pet interests". I am simply asking whether serious consideration of lasting values does not suggest improved service here and sharper cuts in other departments.

We believe in the greatest good for the greatest number.

Howard Pease

OF HOWARD PEASE'S nineteen books for what he calls the junior-high reader (twelve to sixteen), the first—"The Tattooed Man"—was published in 1928, the most recent—"The Dark Adventure"—this autumn, and all but one are in print. Thus identified as a successful author for the young, Mr. Pease, fifty-four, of Palo Alto, Calif., takes the stand and says, among other things:

"The most important thing an author writing in my field can do is to prepare children for life, for the real world. I started writing books for boys when I was teaching in a poor part of the country, and I swore I'd never let a hero win a treasure hunt, make a million dollars, become a bank president overnight. And I never have. Those are false values. They're unfair to a young reader.

"Of course, you can't state a realistic theme as a tract. It has to be implied. The kids are so much smarter than the adults think they are. I could take you to a country school of 300 kids where forty are readers, 260 are not. Those 260 are the ones I want to reach, and they can't be reached by namby-pamby writing. The public libraries don't reach them, because non-readers don't go to public libraries. It's a job for the school libraries. When I go to a town to talk to school kids, I ask for the 'worst' school.

"The biggest change in my time has been in the latitude allowed a writer, and the man who did more for boys' books than any one else was John R. Tunis, back in '42, with his 'All-American,' which used race prejudice as a theme. As a writer, I felt an upsurge of freedom reading that. The bonds were cut.

"How far do we go with realism? I got the idea for my last one when a school superintendent told me that 'juvenile delinquency has crossed the tracks.' I studied three towns, and it was true. Juvenile delinquents of good families were being protected by the people who ran the towns. Question: should I show such a town as it is or as it should be? If I'd done the latter, it wouldn't have been realistic. And the kids would have laughed at me.

"Yes, vocabulary is a problem. Some writers use word lists for certain age groups, but I've never done that. It's condescending, and, besides, children should 'stretch' a little. . . . . Some of the fan mail certainly helps. It tells me, for instance, if I'm getting too wordy. A writer's apt to as he gets on.

"The most important thing in craft I've learned is to tell a story through the mind and senses of one person. The young reader identifies himself with that person. It pays a children's writer to read the best in all writing, to study technique—and then use it. I have learned from Henry James and from Joyce, and used what I learned. I work seven months to a year on a 75,000-word book. That man who used to write the Tom Swift books in three weeks. It's been a long time since then."

N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

For the Record

AIR FORCE. Bob Fleisher, 901 16th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C., is "the World War II-born organ of the AF Association" according to Bernie Roth. And Fleisher is not only a nice assist. managing editor, but pays well.

Photo Releases. The question was raised recently what a writer does with the photo releases he is supposed to get whenever an article requires illustrations. The answer of course is that you send them on to the editor, who will keep them on file. It is he who must okay a story and who will be contacted first, if the person whose picture is used, decides to sue. Releases are often a formality. Publicity-minded celebrities give them out liberally. Newspaper reporters artfully obtain pictures wherever they can. Generally they are protected by by the fact that a news story is in the public interest. However, pictures can sometimes be occasionally considered an invasion of person privacy and/or libellous. It is never a mistake for any writer to have a signed release granting him permission to use the picture.

Writer Helps Another Writer. Here's an interesting story of how two members of the WCS Family teamed up. Helen Langworthy writes: "When I won that radio on the 'Tell Your Neighbor' program, Mrs. Rita Peters wrote in asking me what network the program is on. I told her, but evidently they don't have the Mutual near them, so she coul't write the program in care of a nearby station as they usually ask contributors to do. So she wrote again, asking if there was a NYC address. I remembered in a vague way that I'd seen one. I told her I'd try to locate it. Finally, I did. Shortly afterwards, on the program I caught the end of a story about some one in Cromwell, Minn. I hoped it was Rita. Sure enough, she wrote me later that she had sent in a story about the wonderful service given by a telephone operator there. And, I am glad to report that Rita won a big coffee-matic for it!"

I LIKE WORDS

by Louis Untermeyer

(From the New York *Herald Tribune*)

I like words of plush and velvet,
Of shimmering silk and glossy satin;
I like words of rich brocade, like
Illuminized Latin.

I like words of pearl and coral
And sparkling crystal, where light
may win
A luminous quest, an iridescent
Adventure in.

But best I like the words, like lovers,
By too long separation faint,
That now, in sudden, swift reunion,
Are joyously mated.

Like it, poets?

We have received the Fall (Vol. 1, No. 2) issue of a new quarterly for writers. It is PEN MONEY, Hugh Freese, Upland, Indiana. It appears to be a house-organ for the publisher, which specializes in a number of inexpensive books for writers. The emphasis is put on fillers. Articles by writers, who publicize themselves in telling how they broke in and several advs. by services we (and other responsible writers' organizations) do not approve of. However, PEN MONEY does contain an extensive and well organized market list of filler and contest media. The index is a particularly attractive feature. With more careful editing and attention to advertising responsibility, this could become a valuable magazine for writers attempting to break in on the filler market.

STORYETTE, a California publication which combined the idea of letting new writers buy their way into print with the "chain letter" plan, suspended & is refunding checks.

GIVE THE CHARACTERS A CHANCE

Many inexperienced writers make the serious mistake of "Telling" a story instead of "Showing" it. This is a hard lesson for the young writer to learn. When you have written for many years it becomes instinctive to dramatize. You let the character do or say, or feel rather than you, the author, saying it in an explanatory aside.

As a matter of fact, this is probably one of the most difficult things for the otherwise competent newspaper writers to learn. A great many newspapermen and women have tried to make the transition from reporting or feature writing to fiction. The change-over is simple enough. And usually it is merely a mental block within the writer himself that prevents him or her from managing to write effective fiction. Many newspaper people after one or two preliminary experiments, discover this differential that is just a change in the author's way of thinking about his material. You see, the reporter tells his readers graphically or dramatically what has happened. He is the main actor, even when he is telling about the robber who held up the super-market, bound the cashier and escaped under a "hail of bullets". For it is he who selects the detail, organizes it and presents it effectively. A sort of "I saw this happen".

The fictionist on the other hand must let the robber actually do the robbery in front of the reader. The author must be the robber, or stand behind him and watch his every act, catch his words and perhaps even render vivid his inner feelings. The newspaperman expresses his own feelings and the real facts as he has dug them out. The fictional story-teller expresses the feelings of some other person. He must be able to divorce himself from himself; he must be able to identify himself with some one character strongly, and at least sympathetically with every other character in the story. His job is to show the cross-pull of motives, the chain of cause and effect.

This is something that some people, men & women with strong, dominating personalities find themselves constitutionally unable to do. Unlike an actor, they cannot forget self or put themselves under the skin of each of the puppets they create. So, they have to pull the strings. And that is, of course, fatal.

A MARKET AND A HINT

FARMER'S Magazine, C.H.Hodge, Consolidated Press, Ltd., 73 Richmond St., W., Toronto 1, Ont., Canada, is a market for articles & fillers (How-to-do-its) of farm interest. A picture or set of snapshots helps to sell a ms., but is not paid for. However, they pay well: $3 to $15 for the shorts (50-200 words) and $25 to $35 for the articles. They need to be well written, short and helpful. Staff editors are agricultural college graduates.

C.H.Camidge, a new Canadian subscriber to REWRITE, suggests such ideas for writers in the States as an experience piece, describing improvement of livestock on a farm with fresh pure-bred cattle; or a good market for Canadian pure-bred Holstein Friesian cattle which are being shipped to many parts of the world. Camidge even says writers can use his name in contacting the editors. (He is well known as a free lance writer-photographer.)

We think this is a very fine tip, as well as a generous cooperative act by a new member of the WCS Family.

Practical example. One of the sales listed in the "Batting Average" column occurred because the author happened to mention in a letter to us the general subject as a likely subject. I suggested she send it to such-and-such a market. She did. The editor said he liked it, would she please write in some extra facts and get photos (this meant that the piece was to be played as a top feature instead of a short departmental feature!) In a subsequent letter reporting this success, the author mentioned another subject. Again, I suggested a market, in fact, several, both for the second piece and subsidiary, non-competing markets in which the first piece can be sold a second and even third time angled in an entirely different manner.

This author is working actively with us & so it is a matter of routine for us to help her all we can. By helping her to make sales we help ourselves because she earns some of the money it costs to learn. And it is, naturally, a great satisfaction both to her and to us to see some practical evidence of accomplishment. Good for the morale, as we say when we are feeling discouraged. But that's a good example of why we urge writers whenever possible to keep in close contact with us. Out of our long and varied experiences we can often help a writer to make one ms. more effective, but also frequently make two mss. spring up where only one grew before. It is wonderful what can be done when two writers work together. And are creatively stimulated by finding gold in the ore they mine.

This is further exemplified by the several writers whom we have helped to join some of the Round Robins that WCS Family members conduct among themselves. They are extremely pleased at the opportunity to talk shop, and discuss problems with other writers.

A MARKET AND SOME COMMENT

INTRO, Louis Brigante, Box 860, Grand Central Station, NYC 17, is rather a hard magazine to hit. A new little magazine, a quarterly that is Catholic in background though not in policy. "Devoted to the unearthing of new writers and artists, unknowns the quality of whose work we consider worthy of recognition. Content: creative short stories & poetry, critical essays, letters from abroad and black and white drawings & sketches. You need to study the first issue to get an idea of what they use. Token payment of $5, each accepted ms. (50¢ per copy.)

Boston POST Salutes REWRITE. Muriel Caswell, Household Editor, Boston Sunday POST, an old friend of Bill & Elva, went out of her way to recommend REWRITE in a p.s. to a contributor's letter on how to sidestep rejection slips. Result: requests for copies from most of the New England states. And "we saw it" notes from a number of our Gang. Muriel does a nice, friendly column and encourages her correspondents in their writing. Offers some small prizes for recipes & letters. See her page for details.

Big Business. It is said 10,000 newspapers and 1,000 radio stations, together with hundreds of trade papers were buttered up with $20,000,000 of advertising from the A.M.A., and allied business firms in the recent mass attack on "socialized medicine". Moreover, all media were instructed how they could put pressure on local merchants to swell the advertising volume.

There is something pretty sinister in all that. How can you expect information media, in the face of such a barrage, to speak impartially and objectively? And suppose some editor wished to exercise his integrity and criticize the A.M.A. or point out that "socialized medicine" might conceivably have a few good ideas on its side. (I am not saying that it has, but the essence of true democracy consists of the right to be wrong, and still be heard.) Yes, suppose an editor, or publisher, spoke out frankly and critically. What would happen to him the next time this gravy-wagon comes around, as it surely will before long. Couldn't the party that wields so much power by distributing so much money also exercise power by withholding it? And what would that do to the "public interest"? There's a plot for you. Nay, a "formula" you can adapt to a variety of situations.

Here's another tip: Dr. Clive M. McCay recently told a Congressional committee about the dangers of chemical substitutes in food we eat & drink. Enough chemicals in a bottle of cola to dissolve a 10-penny nail. Chemicals in bread that may be equally dangerous. Chemicals that can be used before the Food & Drug Administration can clamp down on their use. Dr. McCay is the inventor of the Triple High bread. Controversy like that is a good news-peg to hang a story on. Watch for 'em!